



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

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MEDIA RELEASE

Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts Tours Heritage Houses in Port of Spain

Senator the Honourable Randall Mitchell, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, and a team of Ministry officials, embarked on a captivating journey today, Friday 17 March, 2023, as they toured the Angelo Bissessarsingh Heritage House and the Boscoe House. Among his company were Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, Ms. Simone Thorne-Mora Quinones, and Chairman of the Board of the National Museum and Art Gallery of Trinidad and Tobago (NMAG), Mr. Kenwyn Crichlow, who was accompanied by his lovely wife. Guided by the passionate owner and director of the Houses, Ms. Carmelita Bissessarsingh, the team was treated to a mesmerizing and culturally enriching experience.

The Houses have undergone extensive renovations and furnishings to reflect the time period of their construction. The Angelo Bissessarsingh Heritage House (formally known as the Meyler House), was constructed in 1904 by Scottish architect George Brown, and was named after the owner's brother, Angelo Bissessarsingh. He was a local historian and writer before his passing in 2017. Angelo's West Indian book collection, several artefacts, paintings by their father Mr. Rudolph Bissessarsingh, and other collectables are housed there. The Boscoe House (formally known as the Holder House), built in 1888, was also designed by George Brown and previously belonged to the local contemporary artist Boscoe Holder. Therein displays Boscoe's only mural and is open to local and international artists for short retreats.

When asked about her plans for the Houses, Ms. Bissessarsingh expressed her family's passion for facilitating artists and cultural events, as well as inviting the public into the rich history of Trinidad and Tobago. "Our hopes are for locals to be able to come and enjoy workshops, tutorials, design-talks and other cultural events. We are also open to facilitating artist residencies and creating avenues for locals to rent out the space for intimate culture and arts events." She also shared their philanthropic goals to fund art history and design scholarships in the future. Interested persons can make reservations by calling 1(868) 710-3354 or visiting www.abheritagehouse.org.

The Honourable Minister commended Ms. Bissessarsingh and her family for their unwavering commitment to promoting and preserving the arts and cultural legacy of our nation. Minister Mitchell was particularly impressed with the authentic restorations of the houses, which not only honour the cultural icons they represent but also serve as lasting testaments to our country's architectural legacy. He also spoke to the Ministry's plans to develop a National Museum Policy in collaboration with the Board of the National Museum and Art Gallery. "We at the Ministry are eager to develop our museum

sector because our cultural heritage is so important,” he said. “Both public and private sector museums offer Trinbagonians deeper awareness of their rich history. It is critical for local audiences and those in the corporate sector to reclaim value for our museum spaces by visiting and consuming all they have to offer.”

This initiative is aligned with the National Cultural Policy's vision to promote a vibrant and sustainable creative sector. Ms. Bissessarsingh's informative and inspiring tour promises to leave an indelible mark on the hearts and minds of local and international visitors alike, offering a glimpse into the rich heritage and unique cultural tapestry of Trinidad and Tobago.



Senator the Honourable Randall Mitchell offering owner, Ms. Carmelita Bissessarsingh (right), and her aunt, Ms. Ann Marie Bissessar (centre), tokens of appreciation from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts.



Minister Mitchell enjoying learning more from owner, Ms. Carmelita Bissessarsingh, about how the interior furnishings were curated.



Senator the Honourable Randall Mitchell, along with Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, Ms. Simone Thorne-Mora Quinones, enjoying the beautiful interior and vintage collectables within the Angelo Bissessarsingh Heritage House.



The pristinely renovated exterior of the Angelo Bissessarsingh Heritage House.



The decadently furnished interior of the Angelo Bissessarsingh Heritage House.

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